



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) Meeting
June 6, 2023

**Regional Coalition & Washington Communities for
Children (WCFC) Updates**

Regional Coalition Update

Inland Northwest Early Learning Alliance, Northeast

For more information, please contact: Colleen Condon, colleen@lilaccityelc.com

INWELA is working with the Spokane Regional Health District Data Center to further define our purpose and scope of work. We hope to align at least a portion of our work with Washington's new Early Learning Coordination Plan. We hope that a more concise definition of our purpose will allow others to see themselves within our work and allow us to create more meaningful connections within our seven county region.

Christi Harter from Greater Spokane Inc. hosted a gathering of early learning champions from the Spokane area to talk about an early childhood career pathway. This group identified a need to meet with local legislators in July, to talk about pressing issues in the early learning field. INWELA was identified as the convener of the workgroup to create a list of legislative priorities for that meeting.

NEWESD101 is hosting an Early Childhood Conference on June 20th. INWELA sponsored this event by covering registration and travel costs for 17 participants, most of whom are child care providers.

We continue to promote Vroom throughout our region. Two INWELA members hosted a Vroom craft table at the Stratton Spring Carnival in Newport last month. They were able to talk to parents about Vroom while kiddos made a fun spring craft.

All ten WCFC regions are participating in an equity training around Liberatory Design. Each region will identify an equity challenge they would like to focus on as a coalition, and use the Liberatory Design Modes and Mindsets to gather information and test solutions.

Investing in Children Coalition: Central

For more information, please contact: Lindsay Bowsell, lindsayb@yakimavalleycf.org or Marina Medrano, marinam@yakimavalleycf.org

On Tuesday, May 30th, the Investing in Children Coalition will be co-hosting the 'Key Leader Luncheon' event along with Sunnyside United-Unidos. There are over 120+ attendees that have registered for the event. During the event, we'll share about our Coalition's work as well as the work of Help Me Grow Central WA and Sunnyside United-Unidos. The Sunnyside Highschool Mariachi

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band will be performing at the event.

Additionally, the Coalition recently received a grant as part of Congress's Workforce Child Care Investment Initiative. There will be two subrecipients of this grant, the Yakima Valley Community Foundation (YVCF) and the Yakima County Development Association (YCDA). Our goal with these funds is to strengthen and expand access to quality child care for families in the Central Washington region.

King County

For more information, please contact: Alexis Joshua or Bob Findlay, kcelc@childcare.org

The ***King County Early Learning Coalition (KCELC)*** is excited to report that they have a potential candidate for the Health Provider Voice and will begin the onboarding process for their role at the beginning of June. The coalition hopes that this member will help "co-design strategies to connect child and family health providers with one another and the community, to strengthen referral pathways, and remove barriers for families accessing services." The Health Provider facilitator will partner alongside the *Early Head Start (EHS) program* to have KCELC as one of the local Health Services Advisory Committee (HSAC) for the King County community. This connection will promote school readiness, family agency, and community safety. The coalition leadership team has also begun Liberatory Design Training with *Washington Communities for Children (WCFC)* to set guidance and intentionality when shaping equity within the coalition and the King County community.

We are pausing the [Resource Navigation Action Network](#) and will hope to resume in the upcoming month. If you are interested and will like more information, please contact Alexis at kcelc@childcare.org. Lastly, if you would like to learn more about the coalition, previous meetings, resources, and upcoming events you can check out our website page at <https://www.brightspark.org/kcelc/>.

North Central

For more information please contact: Nancy Spurgeon, nspurgeon49@gmail.com

No updates to share at this time.

Northwest

For more information please contact: Linden Obel, linden@nwelcoalition.org

As a regional network of early childhood partners and local early learning coalitions, Northwest Early Learning Coalition continues to collaborate to ensure high-quality early learning experiences for all children. Our current focus areas have been 1) advocating for more equitable policies in the early learning field, strengthening and expanding regional partnerships and collaborative opportunities, and 3) prioritizing resource navigation and access activities that improve how families with young children access the culturally responsive and high-quality resources they want and need to support their children's development and wellbeing.

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Current Highlights and Upcoming Opportunities

- **NWEL Coalition retreat:** With numerous transitions in leadership and shifts in infrastructure over the past couple of years, the coalition is revisiting our purpose, collective priorities, strategy, and governance structure. We will be hosting a full-day in-person gathering with coalition members and partners to connect and build relationships, clarify our purpose and the collective problem, and review our charter, goals, strategy, and next steps.
- **Cross-county collaboration:** The value of our regional coalition is what we can do together. Counties have been exploring opportunities for more multi-county collaboration. This has included the ongoing joint community asset mapping project with Island and San Juan counties, a joint funding proposal between San Juan, Island, and Skagit counties to support resource directory exploration, and others.
- **Liberatory Design training and practice:** As part of Washington Communities for Children, we are participating in the Liberatory Design training and have formed an initial Regional LD Team who will be supporting the regional coalition in utilizing LD as a collective and individual process and practice to center equity in our co-design efforts. We have begun to draft a regional equity challenge and are looking forward to growing representation of our group.
- **Vroom outreach and promotion:** We continue to promote Vroom through various pathways. In collaboration with Help Me Grow WA, we are in the planning stages of a workshop on Vroom + Help Me Grow + CDC's Learn the Signs. Act Early as tools and resources that providers and families can use in tandem to support children's development.
- **WA STEM Early Learning Catalyst opportunity:** We are looking forward to engaging with our Snohomish and Northwest WA STEM Networks on the Early Learning Catalyst project, working to align activities and leverage tools, such as the Early Learning Coordination Plan, State of the Children reports, to expand access to high-quality early learning.

Peninsula Early Learning Coalition

For more information, please contact: Marlaina Simmons, marlaina.pecc@gmail.com or Elisia Anderson, elisiaf_fstep@olypen.com

No updates to share at this time.

Pierce County Early Childhood Network

For more information please contact: McKinley McPheeters, mckinleym@first5fundamentals.org

No updates to share at this time.

Southeast

For more information, please contact: Matt Bona, mbona@esd123.org

Benton/Franklin Early Learning Alliance:

- Reviewed the Washington State Coordination Plan beginning with a presentation from Tracie Kenney from DCYF.
- Planned for and held a Compression Planning session on May 23rd in order to inform a community action plan.
- Scanned our roster to ensure appropriate representatives from key agencies were included in

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correspondence. Reached out to agencies that haven't been engaged in a while and reengaged appropriate people via the Compression Planning Session.

- Explored early learning grant opportunities to help with capacity building.
- Working with our fundraising lead to submit a grant in hopes of bringing art expression to both a home visiting model and to the licensed childcare setting.
- Working with Family Engagement led to disseminating VROOM resources throughout the community.
- Connected agencies to our equity work – beginning with a survey of the communities.

Walla Walla Early Learning Alliance:

Nothing to report at this time.

Asotin-Clarkston Early Learning Alliance:

- Asotin-Clarkston had their TK & Kindergarten Round-up in May. Over 100+ students were screened and assessed for their readiness. The parents met with community providers for health screenings: Medical & Dental appointments. They also made sure all of the students' documents were ready for school. The families then met with our psychologist to go over the results, answer questions and were given a TK/K goodie bag of school tools.

Southwest Washington Early Learning (SWEL)

For more information please contact: Debbie Ham, Debbie.ham@selfwa.org

No updates to share at this time.

Visions for Early Learning, West Central

For more information, please contact: Sheila Kavanaugh, kav.consulting231@gmail.com

Vroom: Our region has focused on the Vroom by Text Card as well as the Vroom New Baby Card. The Vroom New Baby cards are ideal for those partner organizations working with prenatal women and families of infants birth through six months. Bookmarks were also created with the Vroom by Text content. VEL's Vroom partners include the Timberland Regional Library (specifically rural branches), WIC offices, Nurse Family Partnership program, South Sound Parent to Parent, Child Care Action Council, ECEAP and childcare providers.

Coordinated Access/Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS)

VEL is engaged as one of the 2nd year cohorts for the ECCS/DOH grant. We are working in partnership with Help Me Grow (HMG) WA (WithinReach/parenthelp123) to identify what data is missing in these larger state wide resource directories from the local communities. Now we are in the process of exchanging resource data with HMG as well as other relevant resources guides from Grays Harbor.

Equity/Liberatory Design

VEL representatives (Equity Team) are participating in the Equity/Liberatory Design sessions. Our equity team identified an internal and external equity challenge:

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Purpose: Our intention is to help build more equitable systems, and intentionally inclusive groups to better link, coordinate, and advance the well-being of families and children across all early childhood systems.

External Challenge: How can we engage community members and/or organizations that have been underrepresented in early childhood coalition work?

Internal Challenge: How can leaders facilitate meetings to ensure all participants feel heard and valued?

Family Engagement

County early learning coalitions are busy planning their summer family fun resource events as well as tabling at other community events/resource fairs.

WCFC Updates – For more information please contact: info@washingtoncfc.org

WCFC State Updates

For more information please contact: Rachel Hall, WCFC State Lead,
rachelh@first5fundamentals.org

WCFC – State Budget Request

In April, we learned that the WA State legislature included \$2 million over the biennium for WCFC in the state operating budget. This was a major achievement to have the state invest in the WCFC infrastructure. We will spend the coming months determining how best to distribute these funds, as they are less than is required to maintain our structure.

Equity Learning Network and Liberatory Design Training Series

In January, the WCFC Regional Coalition Leads came together to discuss next steps for the statewide Equity Learning Network. The group decided to put a pause on the current Equity Learning Network monthly structure and to intentionally focus on our internal equity work.

Beginning in April, Regional Coalition Leads, State Learning Network Leads, and Regional Equity Learning Network Leads will come together with Melia LaCour from Becoming Justice and Asha Sitaram from the National Equity Project to participate in a series of Liberatory Design trainings.

We acknowledge the Equity Learning Network has taken on various iterations and has been an important space for relationship building, shared and individual learning, and engaging with challenging topics. We hope that this dive into Liberatory Design and focusing on the internal equity work of WCFC will benefit future evolution of the Equity Learning Network.

Support Agency - Leadership Transition

First 5 FUNdamentals, the support agency for WCFC, welcomed Interim Executive Director, Mary Lloyd.

WA State Anchor Partner – Vroom

WCFC was awarded a 3-year grant by the Bezos Family Foundation to become the Washington State Anchor Partner for Vroom. WCFC will utilize our existing infrastructure to promote Vroom to health providers and families in hard-to-reach communities. More information including outreach strategies and target communities available in the coming months.

WCFC Learning Networks – Join us!

There are seven statewide Washington Communities for Children Learning Networks. The purpose of these teams are to foster learning and connections across the state, with particular focus in each of the component areas below. Participation is open to anyone, including state and local partners who are interested in shared learning and activities. For meeting schedules, and to get in touch with Learning Network Leads, please visit our website at washingtoncfc.org/learning-networks.

- Child Care Voice
- Data
- Equity
- Family Voice
- Health Provider Voice
- Policy & Advocacy
- Resource Navigation & Access